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INFO HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL COLLECTIVE
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RUEHTC/AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE 0003

C O N F I D E N T I A L DJIBOUTI 001173

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS
DEPARTMENT FOR AF/E, IO/RHS, NEA/IPA, DRL/MLGA
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE PASS TO AMCONSUL AMSTERDAM

E.O. 12958: DECL: 2019/10/01
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [KWMN](#) [KISL](#) [SOCI](#) [KPAL](#) [IS](#) [DJ](#)
SUBJECT: DJIBOUTI ON GOLDSTONE REPORT AND HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL
RESOLUTIONS

REF: 09 STATE 93358; 09 STATE 98567; 09 STATE 100316
09 DJIBOUTI 1107

CLASSIFIED BY: E. Wong, CDA; REASON: 1.4(B), (D)

[¶1.](#) (SBU) PolOff discussed reftel points with Ministry of Foreign Affairs Director of Legal and Consular Affairs Marie Natalis on October 1. Natalis serves as the MFA's representative on Djibouti's newly-formed National Human Rights Commission, and acts as the MFA's de facto Djibouti-based focal point for Human Rights Council issues. She has been active in a recent series of workshops to improve Djibouti's capacity to prepare and submit required United Nations reporting on human rights issues.

[¶2.](#) (SBU) On ref A points regarding the general U.S. approach to re-engagement with the HRC and priorities for the twelfth session, Natalis emphasized that the GODJ welcomed dialogue with the United States on human rights issues. "Our ear is always open," she said, to discuss issues with a wide range of partners. Domestically, Natalis said, Djibouti was working to promote a "culture of human rights."

[¶3.](#) (C) In response to ref B points on the Goldstone report, Natalis said that while it might be true that the HRC has treated Israel "disproportionately," it is also true that Israel's violations of the human rights of civilians have been "disproportionate." She argued that Goldstone had been chosen for his independence, and said that it was more helpful to have a factual report than wild "speculation" about the situation on the ground. It would be prudent for all parties to study the report carefully before registering "immediate criticism," she added. PolOff assured Natalis that although the U.S. had several immediate and serious concerns about the report, the USG was very carefully examining the report in its entirety. Natalis agreed that the HRC needed to be a place for "frank discussion," and that it should treat all countries equally. The HRC is not a "tribunal," she said, and it is important to move forward constructively without falling into old patterns.

[¶4.](#) (SBU) On ref C points regarding the draft resolution on the "Elimination of Discrimination Against Women," Natalis had no immediate response, but promised to convey points to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Djibouti's Ambassador in Geneva before providing feedback. Post will report any subsequent substantive response.

[¶5.](#) (C) COMMENT. On the Goldstone report, Djibouti is very

unlikely to get out in front, and will likely follow any consensus Arab League or Organization of the Islamic Conference position. Djibouti has welcomed U.S. re-engagement with the HRC (ref D), and clearly remains willing to give U.S. views on HRC issues a full hearing. END COMMENT.
WONG